Peace is surely more than just the absence of war. It is a state of the community and of the world in which healthy human development can take place. Humanistic psychology has something vital to say about the transformation to peace. However, because both humanistic psychology and peace psychology have weighed in most strongly with their concerns about war (White, 1986), this is a good place to start. War is but one of the ways by which we inflict violence on one another. Among all the forms of destructiveness, war is special mainly in the ways in which it is justified. A declaration of war gives a state the recognized right to order people to conquer, destroy, and kill. Why do we do it?

The answer begins with an observation on war that is well documented in Tuchman’s (1984) *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam*. Tuchman’s book details a history of the human propensity to engage in violent wars, including numerous cases in which the potential gains for any of the participants were small compared with the costs. Examples of societies that have been relatively free of violent wars for long periods of time are few and lie mostly outside of the dominant societies modernized in the Western image. The exceptions, although rare, are important given that they bear on critical questions debated within humanistic psychology. What does such recurrent violence have to say about human nature? Are the cruel, selfish, and violent activities as fundamental a part of human nature as the creative, caring, and cooperative actions? If so, do such instinctive aggressive inclinations mean that wars are inevitable?

Humanistic psychology was begun by persons whose appreciation for the richness of human experience and for its value convinced them that the psychology of their day gave too little opportunity for the human potential to thrive. It should be of no surprise that many of these same people were equally concerned about the threat posed by war to diminish not only the hopes of humankind but also the possibilities for its survival, for what does it mean to cherish the individual human while ignoring the human-created cloud that might bring all life to an end?

Many of the legendary figures of humanistic psychology have spoken about the issues of war and peace. Before the advent of the two world wars and the development of nuclear
also be applied to other politically explosive zones of the world” (p. 38).

Although both Rogers and Maslow recognized that society needed to be more inviting to the development of caring and concerned individuals, both placed the major emphasis on the unfolding of the individual potential for caring engagement with the world beyond the ego (Rogers, 1984). In partial contrast, May saw a darker side to human nature that made the unfolding of the human potential for caring more difficult. He believed that the movement toward freedom, toward participation and caring, was most realistic when it recognized the constraints of destiny (see Bohart, Held, Mendelowitz, & Schneider, 2013). For May (1984), these included a “daimonic” human quality that was the source of both creativity and destructiveness. May’s recognition of the destructive potential is a major contribution to the debate on what is needed for peace. Indeed, it is this juxtaposition between the commitment to fulfillment of the human potential and the realization of the human capacity for violence and destruction that has led to one of the most important dialogues about human nature. If people cannot always be counted on to restrict their own belligerent inclinations, then the unfolding of human potential will have to be accompanied by the creation of human institutions that hold us accountable to some greater good.

WHY WAR?

There are many psychological explanations for why humans engage in organized mass killing of each other with such apparent frequency and with approval and even acclaim by others. These surely include the psychological contributions of Freud (1962), Fromm (1964), and Frank (1982), as well as James’s (1910/1995) essay on the moral equivalent of weapons, James (1910/1995) contemplated the psychological alternatives to war. Murphy (1945), whose holistic approach to human personality was prophetic for humanistic psychology, sought to mobilize the strengths of psychology and social science for the prevention of war. Frank (1982, 1986) and Fromm (1961) were pioneers in relating the depth of human experience to the waging of war. Lifton (1967) explained the psychic numbing that occurs as we contemplate mass destruction, and Macy (1983) explored the path to overcome such detachment and despair through supportive action. Profound insights about the relation of the nuclear threat to denial, apocalyptic thinking, pride, gender, and mourning have since been added from depth psychology (Levine, Jacobs, & Rubin, 1988). Friedman (1984) considered the depth of the human commitment to the “other” as a factor critical to avoiding nuclear war. The passion for peace within humanistic psychology has been well documented (Greening, 1986). Well before peace psychology had established its own organization and journal, Greening had presented both an edited volume relating American politics to humanistic psychology (Greening, 1984) and two editions of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology devoted completely to the topic of peace. Maslow (1984) spoke of the dangers of exclusive values, including sovereignty, as a source of intergroup hatred and an obstacle to peace. Particularly during his later years, Rogers saw, with increasing clarity, the need to prevent concentrations of power from precluding the opportunities for an unfolding of the human potential. He was outspoken in opposing the nuclear arms race. Reflecting on the Rust Conference, an international workshop created to extend the person-centered approach to political powers, Rogers (1986) noted, “The person-centered approach might be the catalyst of a long-lasting peace process and should
of war. Recent comments of the Dalai Lama on warfare capture the basic concern:

The unfortunate truth is that we are conditioned to regard warfare as something exciting and even glamorous: the soldiers in smart uniforms (so attractive to children) with their military bands playing alongside them. We see murder as dreadful, but there is no association of war with criminality. On the contrary, it is seen as an opportunity for people to prove their competence and courage. We speak of the heroes it produces, almost as if the greater the number killed, the more heroic the individual. And we talk about this or that weapon as a marvelous piece of technology, forgetting that when it is used it will actually maim and murder living people. Your friend, my friend, our mothers, our fathers, our sisters and brothers, you and me.

What is even worse is the fact that in modern warfare, the roles of those who instigate it are often far removed from the conflict on the ground. At the same time, its impact on noncombatants grows even greater. Those who suffer most in today’s armed conflicts are the innocent—not only the families of those fighting but, in far greater numbers, civilians who often do not play a direct role. Even after the war is over, there continues to be enormous suffering due to land mines and poisoning from the use of chemical weapons. (Bstan-dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV, 1999, pp. 204–205)

The Dalai Lama also noted the effects on the dispersion of destruction. War brings a destruction of infrastructure—roads, bridges, housing, farmlands, electricity, and medical facilities—as well as general economic hardship. This means that, with increasing frequency, women, children, and the elderly are among its prime victims. The history of the sacrifice and sexual abuse of women in war is well documented (Elshattein, 1987; Nikolic-Ristanovic, 1996). Similarly, the Graca Machel report to the United Nations on the effects of war on children documents its disastrous effects on young people. These include the loss of young lives clearly not at fault, the mutilations, the separation from one’s family, the forced recruitment of child soldiers and child sex slaves, the fear, the trauma, and the unresolved anger, which later will influence the survivors’ own propensity to be perpetrators or victims of violence (Wessells, 1998). The Dalai Lama also addressed the impersonality of destruction:

The reality of modern warfare is that the whole enterprise has become almost like a computer game. The ever-increasing sophistication of weaponry has outrun the imaginative capacity of the average layperson. [Its] destructive capacity is so astonishing that whatever arguments there may be in favor of war, they must be vastly inferior to those against. We could almost be forgiven for feeling nostalgia for the way in which battles were fought in ancient times. At least then, people fought one another face-to-face. There was no denying the suffering involved. And in those days, it was usual for rulers to lead their troops in battle. If the ruler was killed, that was generally the end of the matter. But as technology improved, the generals began to stay farther behind. Today they can be thousands of miles away in their bunkers underground. (Bstan-dzin-rgya-mtsho XIV, Dalai Lama, 1999, p. 205)

War, however destructive, always is justified by its protagonists and typically is honored. James (1910/1995) noted, however, that the sentiments tapped by war are not all bad: “Indeed, they represent the more virtuous dimensions of human existence: conceptions of order and discipline, the tradition of service and devotion, of physical fitness, of unstinted exertion, and of universal responsibility” (p. 26).

More recently, Ehrenreich (1997) placed mystical experience at the core of her theory of war. Her claim was that war is a sacrament, a blood ritual that draws on humankind’s oldest and deepest impulses. In the Seville
because they were drafted. They served in combat duty only for as long as their assignments required. Studies show that they were fighting more for their loyalty to their immediate squadrons than for their country (Stouffer, 1965). The morale needed to bear the sacrifices involved—for the soldiers and for the nation—had to be promoted. This war, like most, was sustained by propaganda, demonizing the enemy and extolling the virtues of “our” effort.

The image of a hostile enemy is a precursor to war (Reiber, 1991). The period of the Cold War demonstrated the continuing power of a military and economic elite, on both sides, to create so awesome an enemy (Bronfenbrenner, 1961) that its containment could justify great sacrifices to freedom and well-being at home. In the proxy wars fought in Angola, Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Afghanistan, El Salvador, and Iran, the public typically was treated to televised vilifications of individuals and displays of war that concealed its atrocities and costs. Even then, extended war has been unpopular.

Humanists are people who value all human life. But even for ordinary people both in and out of uniform, for people whose information comes from a mass media relying mainly on reports from the press rooms of government agencies and large corporations, war still is a horror. The images of dedication, purpose, and belonging that it brings forth are often short-lived. This fact alone should be somewhat heartening to those who seek to build a less violent and more caring society. That task is shared by humanistic psychology and peace psychology.

BUILDING PEACE

To appreciate the many ways in which peace can be approached, it is necessary to start with a positive definition of peace, one that goes well beyond the absence of war. A world
at peace is one in which people use means other than violence or the threat of violence to achieve objectives. It is a world in which conflicts are settled peaceably and where the conditions of gross inequality of power and privilege that underlie much of mass violence are changed to conditions of equal opportunity. It is a society that ensures the requisites of a positive identity for all people. It is a world in which the security of one’s surroundings allows for attention to other levels of development. Peace means an environment in which the fulfillment of the human potential of some does not come at the expense of others. Harmon (1984) noted,

The goal of sustained world peace is the goal of a global commonwealth in which war has no legitimacy anywhere; in which every planetary citizen has a reasonable chance to create through his or her own efforts a decent life for self and family; in which men and women live in harmony with the earth and its creatures, cooperating to create a wholesome environment for all; in which there is an ecology of different cultures, the diversity of which is appreciated and supported; in which there is a deep and shared sense of meaning in life itself—meaning that does not have to be sought in mindless acquisition and consumption. (p. 79)

Peace psychology and humanistic psychology have spoken with similar voices on the contribution of the human psyche to violent behavior and participation in war. However, humanistic psychology has adhered closely to understandings and solutions that involve individual attributes and has, by and large, left the political and societal contributions to war to others. The gap is important. Those who now plan and justify excessive efforts for military preparedness, and those whose work depends on this effort, are not rabid militarists, nationalists, or religious crusaders. Some who work most directly within the classified and secret subculture of nuclear weapons, with their godlike power to destroy, show clear signs of addictive attachment and cultlike ritual in their work (Gusterson, 1991; Pilisuk, 1999). A similar case for the addictive attachment to cultural scapegoating has been used to explain the tolerance for the Gulf War and for the devastating effects of the postwar embargo on civilians (Harak, 1992). Surely, war and its preparation do contain addictive aspects. However, most of the people employed in the defense sector are indistinguishable from others working in large competitive corporations. The madness of mass killing lies in the system.

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

The broader definition of peace requires us to examine aspects of violence that go beyond overt warfare. Ramphal (1982) reminded the United Nations of the following:

It does the cause of human rights no good to inveigh against civil and political rights deviations while helping to perpetuate illiteracy, malnutrition, disease, infant mortality, and a low life expectancy among millions of human beings. All the dictators and all the aggressors throughout history, however ruthless, have not succeeded in creating as much misery and suffering as the disparities between the world’s rich and poor sustain today. (p. 1)

Humanistic psychology has always looked on the development of individuals whose respect for others would not permit them to engage directly in unwarranted acts of violence. This is essential in the promotion of peace. It also is not enough. The concept of structural violence helps define the broader domain of peace psychology. Violence is present when an individual or a group of people die or suffer from the preventable actions of others. In structural violence, these actions are
not direct but rather lie in the institutionalized behaviors that make violent outcomes inevitable (Christie, 1997; Galtung, 1996; Pilisuk, 1998). The perpetrator clearly is identifiable in incidents of premeditated murder or rape, in certain hate crimes, and in the shootings of high school children. In acts of war, the sources are more complex, but we still think that we can attribute responsibility.

In the most frequent forms of violence, the sources are more difficult to identify. Between 1950 and 1997, the world economy grew sixfold, to a total of $29 trillion. But each year, 12 million children under 5 years of age die—33,000 per day—the overwhelming majority from preventable conditions. An equal number survive with permanent disabilities that could have been prevented.

In 1997, 250 million children were working. That year, 110 million did not attend primary school, and 275 million failed to attend secondary school. In all, 2 million girls become prostitutes each year. Approximately 585,000 women died during pregnancy or childbirth in 1996. A total of 1.33 billion people live in absolute poverty, receiving less than $1 per day (Bellamy, 1997). This violence is attributable to the ways in which many people, often distant from the victims, conduct their daily lives.

Particularly when we consider structural violence, the distinction between perpetrators and bystanders is diminished. The corporations that buy the land and resources that once sustained viable communities are perpetrators. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which have loaned money for projects that exploited poor countries and left them with enormous debt, are perpetrators. The economic arrangement that leaves some people too impoverished to secure food or inoculations for their children is a perpetrator of structural violence. The government leaders who have not required that a living wage be paid and a safe environment be maintained by companies permitted to locate anywhere are also to blame. Responsibility falls on those who exploit indigenous workers and their environments. It extends to those who maintain such exploitation by providing arms to national rulers who suppress efforts to obtain a living wage. The net of culpability is even greater. What of the stockholders and those people whose pension plans support the exploiting companies? What of the people whose standard of living is elevated by a global economy, the people who purchase the food, clothing, sound systems, and computers at “competitive” prices that have been lowered by the exploitation of child workers and their teenage parents? Are we, ordinary people, however self-actualized, also perpetrators of this structural violence that kills and maims in numbers greater by far than all the identified wars in all time? (Pilisuk, 2008).

TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

To build peace, as opposed to merely wishing for it, profound changes will be required of many, including those who are already aware of the need for transformation. Even those who believe that transformation to a peaceful world is essential but is beyond their own efforts are part of a system whose properties must be changed. Humanistic psychology offers an optimistic view of the capacities for human transformation that begins with awareness. The awareness must include present realities. Peace psychology tries to enlarge the view of what must be transformed and how it must be transformed to create a world that sustains life and enriches the human experience. It confronts us repeatedly with facts that, if not faced, will return to haunt us:

- More resources now are committed to the development and testing of nuclear weapons than were spent (using constant-dollar
natural resources, pay their workers at poverty levels, and accept the toxic wastes of the developed world (Bello, 1994).

- The capacity to wage biological warfare is widespread, and clandestine forms of transmission can protect its users from detection (Barnaby, 1999; Wright, 1990).

- The information technologies so central to the command and control of dangerous weapons often are penetrated by unauthorized sources (Center for Defense Information, 1996).

- Violence by ever younger individuals and groups indicates disconnection and alienation (National Adolescent Health Information Center, 1995; Osofsky, 1995). These conditions provide rich soil both for hate groups and for mobilization of support for militaristic activity by the scapegoating of enemies (Lamy, 1996).

- Military force is considered appropriate for the protection of national interests. Such interests typically are identified as the right to exploit the resources of other countries (Chomsky, 1988, 1991).

- In the decade since the first edition of this handbook, the destruction of the World Trade Center began a new chapter in the evolution of war. A history of U.S. and Western European colonial exploitation and arrogance toward and exploitation of peoples unlike “ourselves” had become more visible to dissenters worldwide. Years of wars, small and large, and of forced indebtedness have created a world of disparate opposition to American hegemony and to the governments that support it. Resistance includes some nongovernmental groups that strike back as they are able and have been labeled terrorists. They have become an enemy without national boundaries and an excuse for unending war. Such war has obliterated the poor tribal nation of Afghanistan. There, as in the war based on deception in comparisons) at the height of the Cold War (Schwartz, 1998). The dangers of this activity are protected by a culture of secrecy at the weapons laboratories (Gusterson, 1991).

- The professional activities of those who develop and rationalize weapons of mass destruction provide extensive financial rewards. These, in turn, ensure an inordinate influence on policy. The vocations also provide gratification for masculine identities that play with a godlike power sufficient to destroy the planet. Such activities often are pursued without conscious awareness of an underlying preoccupation with subjugation of the weak and the feminine (Cohn, 1987; Pilisuk, 1999).

- Military production is associated with the largest and most powerful of the world’s corporate giants, including exorbitant amounts spent on lobbying and political campaigns (Buzuev, 1985).

- Nuclear weapons are proliferating. The number of nations that now have, or are capable of developing, nuclear weapons makes the risk of their use quite high (Renner, 1990). Despite a general inclination to view the threat as past, failures to curtail the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons and to move toward nuclear disarmament leave humanity vulnerable to its own rapid extinction (Wessells, 1995).

- The world market in weapons trade is extensive and provides the means by which ethnopolitical wars are being fought (Greider, 1998; Renner, 1998).

- The global economy is creating populations with no measure of control over the local material and human resources they need to survive (Korten, 1998).

- World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies have left the poorer countries so deep in debt that they have no choice but to allow international commerce to exploit their
Iraq, with the inability to distinguish combatants from civilians or ally from opponent, the standard tools of war have been expanded. The arsenal has come to include coercive interrogation, torture, and the secret abducting of people not charged with any crime, to be sent to other countries where they can be tortured. A secret kill list allows the government to assassinate suspected militants, including U.S. citizens, without charges or trial and without accountability for the killing of innocent family members or bystanders. Whistle-blowers who provide knowledge of the horrors inflicted secretly are jailed. Moreover, efforts to target suspected individuals have come to rely on unmanned drones, sent from afar, with capacities for extensive surveillance and often with capacities to kill as well. Privacy has been sacrificed, and the increased capacity to kill from remote distances poses a new challenge to humanistic psychology. How does our profession react not only to harm inflicted on individuals in particular wars but also to the evolution of an enduring-warfare state (Benjamin, 2012; Pilisuk, 2012; Replogle, 2012; Richmond, 2012)?

LIGHTING A HUMANISTIC PATH TO PEACE

Brewster Smith (1992) suggested a war to preserve nature as an appropriate cause that might become the new moral equivalent to war. Smith noted the political problem in this goal as

Smith (1992) saw the common enemy as our own unsustainable economic practices. The political agenda, he noted, is far beyond the competence of psychology, but psychology knows much about changing behavior. There has been a strong and justifiable caution among humanistic psychologists to applying all that we psychologists know to monitoring people's behavior. It smacks of the Skinnerian worldview, in which some informed elements of society intentionally control the behavior and development of others. Rogers, whose life work focused on allowing the potential of the individual to unfold, persistently raised the question of whose values would define the goals of such intervention. Moreover, psychology, as both a profession and a science, has tried to avoid most political agendas (except perhaps the self-serving agenda of getting more funds for psychological research and services). An ethical issue is raised here. Do we overstep our boundaries by political advocacy, even if such advocacy is intended to influence the behavior of others in ways that we perceive are vital for survival? This issue is not fully resolved in either humanistic psychology or peace psychology.

There are two profound messages prominent in humanistic psychology that appear essential for peace. The first is an ethical view promulgating the value of all people. There no longer is any meaningful ethic of self-interest, and there no longer is any meaningful nationalism. Our collective survival requires the appreciation of a “community of otherness” in which acceptance and willingness to dialogue comes without regard to our perceived differences (Friedman, 1983, 1984). Peace psychology has brought forward the means for such dialogue in forms of dispute resolution that can be applied even under conditions of deadlocked distrust and ideological intransigence (Deutsch, 1994; Kelman, 1999; Osgood, 1962; Pilisuk, 1997; Pilisuk, Kiritz, & Clampitt, 1971; Rapoport, 1960; Sherif & Sherif, 1969).

A second essential teaching from humanistic psychology is with regard to the capacity
For involvement in social action on behalf of peace. Humanistic psychology has long stressed the need for the fulfilled human to identify with causes beyond the self (Maslow, 1971, 1984). What causes and what courses of action to choose has been less clear, but building of peace must be high on the agenda given that destructive paths threaten to obliterate the entire experiment of life on earth. The agenda must include an awareness of the harsh facts that jeopardize peace but must not allow us to be paralyzed by them.

Small causes with clearly achievable ends, such as providing therapy and hope to victimized individuals, surely are more comforting in the short term than is something so grand as building a peaceful world. But often these highly human efforts to improve the quality of lives leave untouched the underlying causes of massive suffering. The effort needs to be linked to a larger vision. On the other hand, writing about grand transformational visions and contemplating them, however essential, might make us part of a self-congratulatory elite detached from the pain of ordinary people. The paradox points to some important lessons. First, everyone has value, and all people must be included. Those who have been subjected to inhumane treatment are in the greatest need of opportunities to express their potential. Their participation is vitally needed if large-scale change is to occur. Second, no analysis of a broad social problem is complete if it ends with what must be done. The analysis also must include what we ourselves must do.

Campbell (1984) asked just what the business of humanistic psychology is:

To reconceptualize our role in society, . . . we must start with conscious self-evaluation and learn to take responsibility for the effects of our actions. I believe our major challenge, our business, is to apply the skills and resources accumulated in humanistic psychology in the broad arena of social change. (p. 202)

Activities to address the transition to a peaceful world can appear demanding and draining. Here, Macy (1984) offered a mindset that could help sustain such activity:

The action is not a burden that we nobly assume: “I am going to go out and save the world.” That’s very boring, very tedious. But when you experience it as being liberated into your true nature, which is inextricably interwoven with that of every other being, then your conceptual structure of reality and your response to it are inseparable. Each act then becomes a way of affirming and knowing afresh the reality to which the doctrine gives form. (p. 118)

In the final analysis, we have no way of knowing whether we will be able to increase our involvement sufficiently to bring about a transformation to a world at peace. We do not know whether our practices to find deeper awareness or inner peace will help us attain this end. Nor do we know whether we will be able to build institutions within which the potential for both direct and structural cruelty will be seriously lessened and the potential for goodness will be markedly enhanced. But we do know that if we love and honor life, then we must try.

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